

ABSTRACT

A group formation/management system that rigidly sets the range of a group, and allows contents to be used freely among member devices in the group, the system including one
5 or more registered member devices operable to hold common secret information unique to the group, a new member device operable to transmit a request for registration in the group and to receive and hold common secret information, and a group management device operable to receive the registration
10 request from the new member device and, when the number of registered member devices is less than the maximum number of registerable member devices, to output the common secret information to the new member device. Furthermore, because member devices are authenticated using the common secret
15 information when contents are to be used, and contents only delivered if the authentication is successful, it is possible to prevent member devices that do not hold the common secret information (i.e. unregistered member devices) from using contents.